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Report of the Security Council mission to the Lake Chad Basin region (Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria), 1-7 March 2017

I. Introduction

1. In his letter dated 25 January 2017, the President of the Security Council informed the Secretary-General that the Council had decided to send a mission to the Lake Chad Basin region (Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria) from 1 to 7 March 2017. The mission was led jointly by the Permanent Representatives of France, Senegal and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The composition of the mission and its terms of reference are set out in annexes I and II to the present report.

II. Cameroon

2. On 2 and 3 March, the Security Council visited Cameroon. Upon arrival in Yaoundé, the members of the Security Council were welcomed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Relations, and the United Nations Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator, Najat Rochdi. On the same night they attended a dinner hosted by the Minister Delegate for External Relations, members of the diplomatic community and Heads of United Nations agencies. On 3 March, Council members held meetings in Yaoundé with the United Nations country team as well as national authorities including the President and the Prime Minister, and key Cabinet members. After a press conference, they travelled to Maroua, Far North Region, where they met with the Governor of the Region and other local officials, religious leaders, military officials, a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and some internally displaced persons and refugees, including two persons formerly abducted by Boko Haram. At the outset of each meeting, the United Kingdom, as co-lead and President of the Security Council during the month of March, outlined the purpose of the visit, seeking the views of the various interlocutors on the situation and the challenges faced.

A. Yaoundé

Meeting with the President

3. At his meeting with the members of the Security Council, the President of Cameroon, Paul Biya, accompanied by the Ministers for External Relations,

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Territorial Administration, and Defence, explained that Cameroon had been confronted by the Boko Haram conflict since 2013 — a war that had spilled over from Nigeria. He highlighted the high human cost, with over 2,000 civilians and 250 military personnel killed since the beginning of the violence. He stated that the Cameroonian Army had been at the forefront of the fight against Boko Haram, resulting in a huge financial cost of CFAF 343 billion over two years (equivalent of $558 million), which amounts to almost 2 per cent of GDP. The President noted that while Boko Haram had been weakened, thanks to the positive gains made by the Multinational Joint Task Force, the group remained operational. He informed the Council that several infrastructures had been destroyed, resulting in the displacement of over 200,000 civilians, coupled by the arrival of some 86,000 refugees from Nigeria. He stated that this placed a heavy burden on the Government to build new schools and provide food and basic social services. He called for support from the donor community to improve the resilience of communities, especially women and children. While saluting the outcome of the Oslo Humanitarian Conference for Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region, he noted that there was a need to end the exclusive focus on humanitarian needs and for an active engagement on economic recovery, creating livelihoods and reconstruction. He added that there was a need to undertake demobilization, deradicalization and reintegration programmes for former Boko Haram fighters, for "an era of hope to begin". President Biya expressed his appreciation for the work of the United Nations, noting that the Council's visit was a sign of excellent cooperation with the Organization.

4. The co-leads of the Security Council mission briefed the President on the purpose of the mission, namely to express solidarity with and commend Cameroon on its efforts to fight against terrorism and to pay tribute to those who had sacrificed their lives. Members of the Council welcomed the signing on 2 March 2017 of the Tripartite Agreement between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Governments of Cameroon and Nigeria, and commended Cameroon for generously hosting large numbers of refugees. They also highlighted the need to address the root causes of the crisis, the environmental challenges, and human rights and the need for increased investments and development in the Far North Region, and expressed interest in learning of the Government's efforts in that regard. The President stated that the country counted on the support of the international community on the military front, especially with regard to the provision of equipment and training of their troops. He also noted that Boko Haram attacks and the ensuing counter-insurgency operations have had an economic toll on the country, adding that those 200,000 displaced by the fighting would need to return to a life of normalcy. The President said that the Cameroonian population had financially contributed to an emergency fund in support of the fight against Boko Haram, and that the Government had set up vigilante committees that helped with intelligence-gathering. He noted that Chad, the Niger and Nigeria were also making huge efforts to fight Boko Haram. He appealed to the international community to help the region to eradicate the group, especially following their pledge of allegiance to Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh), thus posing a threat to global peace and security. The President expressed his sincere gratitude to the United Nations for its support to Cameroon.

5. The Minister for External Relations informed Council members that some internally displaced persons, most of them women and children, had benefited from Government assistance through the emergency fund established to support internally displaced persons and the local population. He added that, with the support of the United Nations humanitarian community, the Government had formulated the humanitarian response plan for 2017, which sought $360 million. Concerning the Tripartite Agreement, he said that Cameroon would abide by its obligation and ensure the non-refoulement of refugees.

Meeting with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet

6. At his meeting with the members of the Security Council, the Prime Minister, Philémon Yang, stated that addressing the impact of Boko Haram was an enormous undertaking for his Government. He noted that in the afflicted Far North Region there were thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons. He thanked UNHCR for its efforts in addressing that crisis. He stressed that the support of the international community was necessary to eradicate Boko Haram.

7. The Minister Delegate at the Presidency in charge of defence thanked Member States for their support to the country's military effort against Boko Haram and in its humanitarian response. He made particular reference to China, France, Italy, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America for their bilateral support. The country had lost 200 soldiers and over 2,000 civilians because of Boko Haram. He noted that there had been significant progress in the bilateral military cooperation with Nigeria since President Muhammadu Buhari came to power. He informed Council members that Cameroon and Nigeria had stepped up Multinational Joint Task Force activities on either side of their border over the past six months. The Minister asserted that Boko Haram was on the back foot as a result of the operations of the Task Force and that the group had resorted to unconventional combat through the use of suicide bombings and improvised explosive devices. The Minister informed Council members that the Government was working on a policy to reintegrate Boko Haram defectors. He noted that most Boko Haram combatants were non-Cameroonian. Of those captured, tried and imprisoned, 80 to 90 per cent were foreigners. The Minister said that, while Boko Haram had been severely affected by the military operations, there were no defectors registered thus far. The Government was working with faith communities to see what could be preached in mosques. The Minister noted that the Government avoided talk of Boko Haram as a jihadi group, commenting instead that it was composed of terrorists and bandits, who decapitated Muslims in mosques. The Minister concluded that the Government was drawing heavily on resources to address the security situation and that those resources could be used for other priorities instead.

8. The Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization stated that Cameroon hosts around 65,000 Nigerian refugees in a camp in the Far North Region, in addition to 150,000 refugees from the Central African Republic in the east. The refugees were being provided with security and nutritional needs. He noted that there were a high number of women and children in the refugee camps. The children were being provided with schooling, in partnership with the United Nations and other bilateral partners, to prevent them falling prey to recruitment by Boko Haram. The Minister welcomed the Tripartite Agreement between UNHCR and the Governments of Cameroon and Nigeria, which should enable the normalization and gradual return of refugees back to Nigeria. The Minister noted that the agreement sets out the responsibilities of the countries to ensure a safe, voluntary and dignified return of Nigerian refugees, who must be resettled in favourable conditions. He said that a tripartite committee composed of two members each from Cameroon, Nigeria and UNHCR was entrusted with the operationalization of the return programme. He added that missions would be conducted to verify the conditions in areas that would be receiving the refugees. He reiterated that the returns would be voluntary in accordance with international law. He also noted that a group of experts on the ground would assist the parties in identifying those who wished to return. The Minister said that the Government was also trying to reform Quranic schools to ensure that religious education was complemented with vocational training to provide young people with skills for jobs and allow them to escape the clutches of Boko Haram. The Government was also ensuring that religious leaders did not incite extremism, noting that coexistence between religious communities was a unique

feature of Cameroonian society. The Minister stressed the need to link development with the fight against terrorism. He noted that, while the Government had responded to the situation in the Far North Region from a security and military viewpoint, there was a need to focus on development activities, and he urged the international community to provide assistance to Cameroon in that regard.

9. The Minister of Finance stated that in addition to the security crisis Cameroon was currently facing an economic crisis, with a 40 per cent decline in revenues, but with a 5 per cent growth rate since 2015. The security situation had added to the budgetary constraints. He called for a holistic approach in the aftermath of Boko Haram and stressed the need for development, investment and the education of youth, especially young women, to provide them with opportunities. The Minister of Communications noted that Boko Haram used the Internet for recruitment and fundraising for its activities. The Minister Delegate to the Minister for External Relations in charge of relations with the Commonwealth highlighted the central role of President Biya in raising the issue of Boko Haram on the international platform, adding that the Government was trying to encourage States members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to come together to address the crisis.

Meeting with the United Nations country team and representatives of the diplomatic corps

10. The United Nations country team noted that Cameroon was the country second most affected by Boko Haram after Nigeria. The number of people requiring immediate assistance as of December 2016 was 1.6 million, an increase of 7 per cent over the previous year. Within one year, the number of internally displaced persons had increased by almost 100 per cent, from 93,000 to more than 190,000. More than 50 per cent of all internally displaced persons were located in the Logone-et-Chari Department. In addition, around 85,000 Nigerian refugees had sought protection in the Far North Region, and some 60,000 of them were living in the overcrowded Minawao Camp. The United Nations country team stressed that all refugee returns must be safe, voluntary and dignified and that, since January 2016, tens of thousands of Nigerian refugees had been returned against their will. In fact, the week before the Security Council's visit, 300 women and girls had allegedly been forcibly returned. In that regard, the signing of the Tripartite Agreement between UNHCR and the Governments of Cameroon and Nigeria was a welcome step. The United Nations country team informed the Council that $52 million was mobilized for the humanitarian response in the Far North Region in 2016, which contributed to saving lives; however, some sectors such as education and shelter remained severely underfunded. Almost 50 per cent of people in need would be targeted with humanitarian action in 2017 and $190 million was needed for the most urgent cases in the Far North Region in 2017.

11. The United Nations country team noted that from 2014 to 2017 there were 75 suicide attacks in Cameroon, 46 of them carried out by women and children. The Boko Haram crisis had exacerbated the vulnerability of young women in the Far North Region, where 60 per cent of women married before the age of 18 and the average number of children per woman was 6.6, compared to 3.1 in Yaoundé. Because of Boko Haram, 33 per cent of households were run by women, and early marriage, an economic coping mechanism, had become a protective strategy for women. Sexual and gender-based violence was a common tool for terrorism and intimidation. Young women feared to go to fetch firewood and feared being seen in public places, as they were likely to be attacked. The United Nations country team noted the closures of hospitals and schools in the Far North Region and the absence of social services. With regard to children, they highlighted several challenges,

including the low age of criminal responsibility in the country (10 years) and the lack of a juvenile justice system. The United Nations country team was supporting the authorities by carrying out preventive work with religious and traditional leaders, and by carrying out protection work at the community level.

12. The United Nations country team informed the mission that the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2018-2020 contained a pillar on strengthening the resilience of people and the system. Access to services, the community and social and environmental resilience were a priority, particularly in the Department of Logone-et-Chari. The United Nations country team was trying to operationalize the humanitarian-security-development nexus through the recovery and peacebuilding assessment for the northern and eastern regions of the country, and appealed for funds in that regard.

13. The Resident Coordinator noted that there was ongoing discussion and coordination between the United Nations humanitarian and development teams on the ground. This was clearly reflected in the humanitarian response plan, which included recovery and resilience, and in the Development Assistance Framework, which included malnutrition and food security. The two plans were aligned and involved the Government from their initial phases. The United Nations country team stressed the importance of civilian and military coordination to safeguard humanitarian access.

14. Representatives of the diplomatic corps highlighted the shrinking of Lake Chad as one of the main contributors to the Lake Chad Basin crisis, noting that a climate change catastrophe was leading to a human catastrophe. They commended the work of the United Nations country team and the Government of Cameroon in addressing the crisis, adding that the latter had made a huge budgetary contribution and had set up an interministerial commission under the leadership of the Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization.

B. Maroua

Meeting with the Governor of the Far North Region, security forces, traditional leaders and mayors

15. During a meeting chaired by the Governor of the Far North Region that was attended by senior military officers, traditional chiefs and religious leaders, members of the military forces provided an update on the military operations in the Far North, which also include Cameroon's Emergence 4 operation, the Multinational Joint Task Force Sector 1 command and Operation Alpha. They also reported that their troops worked closely with the Task Force operations being conducted in Nigeria and that the Cameroonian and Nigerian forces were in daily communication. They added that the military capacity of Boko Haram had been hamstrung and the group was no longer trying to create a caliphate. Instead, the group carried out suicide attacks, raids and pillaging, and planted improvised explosive devices on the main thoroughfares. The security forces were working closely with the neighbourhood watch groups. There was a need for improvised explosive device detection equipment and protection gear for those who came into contact with the devices. There was also a need for "amphibious capabilities" such as shallow draft vessels that could move easily.

16. The mayor of a town in the Far North Region noted that economic activity and trade in the region had plunged by 90 per cent as a result of Boko Haram's activities. While noting the efforts of Boko Haram to recruit youth and the problem of unemployment, he stressed that the group did not represent Islam, and spoke of the important role of the Government, the military and the United Nations country

team in countering recruitment efforts. To address this threat, he highlighted the need to focus on development, education and creating job opportunities. He noted that people felt safer as a result of the presence of neighbourhood watch groups in the border areas. The presence of humanitarian actors, including in the border areas, was helping to stabilize the situation. The mayor thanked the United Nations system, particularly the Resident Coordinator, for the support provided, but nonetheless highlighted the need for further assistance.

Meeting with the International Committee of the Red Cross

17. At a meeting with the members of the Security Council, the representative of ICRC said that ICRC was trying to enhance its access in the Far North Region and was observing the constraints and adjusting its operations accordingly. ICRC reported that there had been progress in access to the border areas, where the populations were vulnerable to attacks by Boko Haram. Businesses could not be run because of border closures, trade activities had been seized and there were constraints in handling livestock. ICRC accompanied the Cameroonian authorities in helping families to trace their relatives who had defected from Boko Haram or those who were in prison, and for the latter facilitated visits to detention centres. ICRC was also assisting host families by supporting their farming activities through the provision of seeds. It was also providing water and more access to health care to both the internally displaced persons and the host communities. ICRC maintained coordination networks that were working and targeting areas of greatest needs.

Meeting with internally displaced persons and refugees

18. Council members heard from a number of internally displaced persons and refugees about their living situation and the challenges they faced, such as water shortages at Minawao Camp, sometimes for two to three days, difficulty in obtaining firewood for cooking, and the absence of work opportunities for refugees, notably land to farm especially for those who had been living in Cameroon over an extended period of time, some for over three years. They also spoke of the overcrowding at the Minawao Camp, where there was a continuing influx of refugees, noting the poor health and inadequate education facilities.

19. Council members also met with two boys, aged 14 and 15, who had been abducted by Boko Haram and had managed to escape only to be detained by the authorities on suspicion of being associated with the group. One of the boys explained that he was abducted by Boko Haram when it attacked his village, Banki, in Nigeria in 2014. He explained that he managed to escape the group when asked to go to fetch water, and returned to his village. He added however that his father was afraid Boko Haram would come to look for him and so had convinced him to cross the border, disguised as a girl, to Cameroon, where he was again initially detained, on suspicion of being associated with Boko Haram. The other boy, from Gwoza, a Nigerian village on the border with Cameroon, was abducted in 2013 by Boko Haram, and was held for four months, but managed to escape to Cameroon. After arriving in Cameroon he was held at Maroua Central Prison for two and a half years because of his suspected association with Boko Haram.

C. Observations/key messages

20. The members of the Security Council expressed their full support to the efforts of Cameroon and the progress made in the fight against Boko Haram. The members of the Council expressed serious concerns at the deterioration of the humanitarian situation and commended Cameroon for generously providing a safe haven for refugees, and welcomed the signing of the Tripartite Agreement between Cameroon,

Nigeria and UNHCR. The Council also encouraged the Government of Cameroon to make progress on the creation of dedicated strategies, funds and zones for the development of the Far North Region. The members of the Council also noted the need to address women's rights and called for the inclusion and representation of women in the planning and delivery of programmes. The members of the Council underscored the importance of fighting terrorism, including by addressing climate change and poverty, ensuring good governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law, and investing in education and economic recovery.

III. Chad

21. The Security Council visited Chad on 4 March. Council members held a number of meetings in N'Djamena with Government officials, the United Nations country team and the humanitarian community, as well as with the leadership of the Multinational Joint Task Force and Operation Barkhane. Council members were unable to meet with the President, Idriss Deby Itno, who was away on a state visit, but met with the Prime Minister and key Cabinet members. The focus of discussions was current Government and humanitarian efforts to address the crisis related to Boko Haram activities, and progress made and challenges faced by the Multinational Joint Task Force. The visit provided an opportunity to the Council to express concern about the protection of civilians in the course of counter-insurgency operations, and to call for the continued respect for international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law.

A. N'Djamena

Meeting with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet

22. At his meeting with the members of the Security Council, the Prime Minister, Albert Pahimi Padacké, noted that Chad was addressing the terrorist threat posed by Boko Haram, highlighting the economic impact of fighting the group. The costs borne by Chad in the security sphere had come at the expense of the education and health of the population. Construction projects had stopped around the country and there were also social consequences due to the expansive aspect of the military operations and the hosting of refugees and internally displaced persons. Chad had expected the international community's support since the beginning of the Boko Haram problem, but that support had been delayed. Chad was bearing the costs of refugees and internally displaced persons, in addition to the costs of the fight against terrorism. He stated that the economic burden on Chad and the neighbouring countries was becoming increasingly difficult to shoulder. Almost 70 per cent of the Government's budget comes from oil-based resources and with the decline in the price of oil Chad was faced with an economic crisis. For the past two years, the Government had been trying to modernize the finances of the country, but that had halted, owing to the current economic crisis.

23. The Prime Minister welcomed the recognition by the Security Council members that the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin was neglected and an injustice. He noted that military operations were currently under way against Boko Haram, particularly in the border regions with Nigeria and the Niger, where Boko Haram activities continued to cause the displacement of the local populations. The humanitarian situation was dramatic as Boko Haram atrocities had compounded the situation of the refugees that Chad hosted from Darfur, the Central African Republic and Libya. The Prime Minister said that, according to estimates from the Office for

the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, more than 4.7 million people were in need of humanitarian aid.

24. The Prime Minister stressed that it was more than urgent for the Security Council to support the Multinational Joint Task Force, as the military response was necessary. He also added that investing in the development of the region, creating opportunities for the youth and deradicalization were imperative. He reiterated that Chad had no means to maintain the current status of its military operations, which were an unsustainable burden on the country.

25. The Prime Minister asserted that the security and humanitarian issues went beyond the Lake Chad Basin. Chad was at a crossroads of civilizations and was surrounded by conflicts, including in the Sudan, Nigeria, Libya and the Central African Republic. Attempts by ISIL/Da'esh to coordinate with Boko Haram came at a time when military means were at their limit. The situation in southern Libya represented a real threat for Chad and sub-Saharan Africa in general. The Government was obliged to close its border with Libya as a result of the threat from ISIL/Da'esh moving to the border area with the probable intention of joining up with Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin or with armed groups in Darfur. The Chadian people questioned the country's engagement in the fight against terrorism, which went beyond its capacities. The Government believed that failure in Chad would expose all of sub-Saharan Africa, which is why it was engaged in the Multinational Joint Task Force.

26. The Prime Minister said that the Chadian authorities had received over 1,000 people from Boko Haram occupied areas. They were cantoned and given food. There were several in the group who simply happened to be in the zone occupied by Boko Haram. There were others who had been active with Boko Haram, but then repented and decided to return. For lack of means, the Government sent the women and children back to their traditional chiefs, even though it would have been better to have them undergo a de-radicalization process. The men were sent to a camp, but many of them had deserted it. The Prime Minister reiterated that there was a need for resources to welcome back those who returned from Boko Haram and deradicalize them. He also pointed out that it was also important to ameliorate the conditions of the host communities, in order to ensure a peaceful coexistence with the internally displaced persons and refugees that they were hosting.

27. The Prime Minister highlighted that the dwindling water resources of Lake Chad had affected the resources available to the local populations, which had made them vulnerable to Boko Haram. He said that replenishing the waters of the lake would not only contribute to the development of the region but would also contribute to stability in Africa. The Prime Minister noted that a donors' round-table conference in Paris later in the year was aimed at attracting resources for the national five-year development plan targeting the affected areas and fighting terrorism. The resources would also help in ensuring basic services for the affected populations and in diversifying the economy.

28. The Prime Minister highlighted several steps taken by the Government with regard to women's empowerment, including a requirement for a minimum of 30 per cent representation of women in decision-making positions and the adoption of a law against early marriage. Among other things, the latter would contribute towards keeping girls in school. These measures were necessary given the traditional pressures on women in Chadian society. In conclusion, he thanked the United Nations Secretary-General and the United Nations agencies on the ground for their support in providing humanitarian assistance and for their efforts in peacebuilding, food security and sustainable development.

29. Security Council members reiterated that fighting terrorism also required addressing poverty, ensuring respect for human rights, particularly the rights of women and children, who are disproportionately affected by terrorism. There was a need for a comprehensive approach to fighting Boko Haram.

Visit to the headquarters of Operation Barkhane

30. Members of the Security Council conducted a short visit to the headquarters of Operation Barkhane, a French military operation composed of 4,000 personnel, 15 helicopters and seven fighter aircraft, where they were briefed on the role and responsibilities of the operation. Its main aim was to tackle terrorism in the Sahel. The operation carries out direct action against terrorist groups and provides support to the military operations of the States members of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel). Security Council members were informed that with regard to the fight against Boko Haram, Operation Barkhane provided intelligence and logistical and planning support to the Multinational Joint Task Force. Operation Barkhane also provided military equipment to the militaries of Chad and the Niger in their fight against Boko Haram, when requested to do so.

Visit to the headquarters of the Multinational Joint Task Force

31. Members of the Security Council visited the headquarters of the Multinational Joint Task Force, where they met with the Force Commander, Major General Lo Adeosun, as well as other senior military officials. Council members received a briefing on the mandate of the Task Force, its command and control, the security and humanitarian situation in its area of operations, administration and logistics and the Task Force's achievements and challenges.

32. Security Council members were informed that the Multinational Joint Task Force had three main mandate areas, namely, (a) to create a safe environment in areas affected by Boko Haram, including tackling sexual and gender-based violence in full compliance with international law and the United Nations Human Rights Due Diligence Policy; (b) to facilitate the implementation of stabilization programmes by States members of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Benin in areas affected by the activities of Boko Haram; and (c) to facilitate humanitarian operations and the delivery of assistance to the affected populations. With regard to its command and control, Council members were informed of the three structures of the Task Force: a strategic cell located within the Lake Chad Basin Commission headquarters, the operational structure headquartered in N'Djamena, and tactical sector commands, composed of national contingents that included tactical combat units and support elements from the four Lake Chad Basin countries, plus Benin. The Multinational Joint Task Force was engaged in real-time battles against Boko Haram, cutting across the countries of the Lake Chad Basin Commission. It included anglophone and francophone contingents operating in synergy and covered the two subregional organizations ECCAS and ECOWAS. The Task Force contingents/sectors operated within their own national borders, where the Force receives no external reinforcements during operations. The Task Force currently had 10,506 personnel on the ground out of a mandated capacity of 11,256. Around 70 per cent of the civilian component of the Task Force had been recruited and deployed and the rest of the positions should be filled soon, including that of a gender and child protection adviser, which is under the responsibility of the African Union. Security Council members were informed that the 's civilian component of the Task Force included human rights advisers, some of whom were deployed within the various sectors.

33. Council members were informed that the Multinational Joint Task Force was conducting vigorous military operations that had substantially degraded the terrorist threat of Boko Haram, but that the group was still active in certain pockets within

the Task Force's area of operation, mainly in the islands of Lake Chad. There were joint operations ongoing to liberate these areas. Council members were informed that the capabilities of Boko Haram included a rapid mobilization of fighters, the possession of armoured personnel carriers, surface-to-air missiles, mortar tubes and artillery pieces and proficiency in the use of improvised explosive devices. The group carried out suicide bombings, including in Maiduguri on 3 March, when only one bomber was killed and the others were arrested. Around 70 per cent of Boko Haram's weapons were captured from military locations attacked by the group, but there were also local, clandestine ways of acquiring weapons.

34. Council members were informed that funds provided to the Multinational Joint Task Force by the European Union and the United Kingdom through the African Union had been only partially disbursed. The Task Force received intelligence support from Operation Barkhane (in N'Djamena), the Regional Intelligence Fusion Unit (based in Abuja) and the Coordination and Liaison Cell (based in N'Djamena). Operation Barkhane provided intelligence and resources to move equipment around. It also made its facilities available to the Task Force and contributed to the training of Task Force personnel. Logistics were provided by the civilian mission support team, which was integrated within the Task Force. The Task Force had recently received from the African Union equipment and vehicles (15 vehicles, 30 rough terrain vehicles, and 15 generators) delivered that week and purchased from the United Kingdom fund of £5 million.

35. With regard to the humanitarian situation in the area of operation of the Multinational Joint Task Force, Security Council members were informed that Boko Haram's activities threatened 20 million people. The Task Force carried out its activities in consultation with the United Nations country team and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the four affected countries. The Task Force secured internally displaced persons and refugee camps and escorted humanitarian delivery missions. While the humanitarian community sometimes needed to do things alone, the use of military escorts was necessary given the ambushes, kidnappings and use of improvised explosive devices by Boko Haram. Since January 2016, the Task Force had freed at least 20,570 hostages from Boko Haram. The Task Force stressed that the demining of areas was essential. It highlighted the excellent cooperation between the four sector commands. The Task Force had neutralized 828 Boko Haram terrorists and arrested 615 of them. A further 1,300 alleged Boko Haram members had surrendered to its troops in 2016 and they were handed over to Chadian authorities in Baga Sola. The Task Force had destroyed 32 Boko Haram camps and captured equipment and cattle from the group.

36. Security Council members were informed that some challenges facing the Multinational Joint Task Force included inadequate military platforms, restrictions in movement, inadequate amphibious capacity, inadequate casualty evacuation capability, inadequate night fighting capability, inadequate improvised explosive device detection capability and inadequate intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities. The Task Force faced difficulties in communications. In addition, the African Union was unable to fully implement its support agreement with the Task Force. Council members were also informed that host communities needed assistance and that almost 1 million people could not be reached with humanitarian aid. They were also told that the Task Force evacuated civilians from areas where they could become an easy target of Boko Haram and moved them to the nearest internally displaced person camps. The Task Force troops received regular training in international humanitarian law.

United Nations country team and international and national non-governmental organizations

37. The Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator briefed the mission on the humanitarian and development situation in Chad, noting that the funding needs of the Lake Chad Basin region covered about a quarter of the humanitarian response plan for Chad. There were 127,000 displaced people in the Lac Region of Chad, including 104,000 internally displaced persons, 8,000 mainly Nigerian refugees and 15,000 Chadian returnees. This was in addition to 394,000 refugees from the Sudan and the Central African Republic, mostly in the east and the south, respectively. Moreover, 100,000 Chadians had returned from the Central African Republic, Nigeria and the Sudan. The Lac Region was one of the poorest regions in Chad, where the lack of proper livelihoods and the impact of the displaced on the host communities were evident. Chad was at the bottom of the human development index, with the Niger, and access to basic services was poor throughout the country, particularly in the Lac Region and the remote areas on the islands of Lake Chad. The Resident Coordinator commented that Chad was at an advantage when compared to the neighbouring countries, as there was much better access in the Lac Region, where 35 humanitarian agencies were operating and over 100 United Nations staff members were located. The area suffered from chronic poverty and a lack of human development.

38. The Resident Coordinator also informed the Council that, according to the humanitarian appeal for Chad, 4.7 million people, or about a third of the population, were in need of humanitarian assistance. There were three main humanitarian crisis areas, namely, (a) food insecurity and malnutrition, as 4.3 million people suffered food insecurity, and 1 million were facing severe food insecurity in the next lean season; (b) population movements and displacement, with refugees and returnees from the Central African Republic and the Sudan being long-term residents of Chad and largely integrated into Chadian society; and (c) health. There was a prevalence of epidemic diseases and the country had one of the world's highest rates of maternal and child mortality. The Resident Coordinator noted that Chad was not a priority for donors in terms of development assistance. In 2015, the country received $607 million in official development assistance, compared to $866 million for Nigeria and $1.2 billion for Mali. The humanitarian appeal in 2016 was almost 53 per cent funded and the appeal for 2017 was for $589 million, $121 million of which was dedicated for the Lac Region.

39. The United Nations country team informed Council members that Chad was second on the global hunger index, with almost 50 per cent of child mortality related to malnutrition. The activities of Boko Haram and ensuing border closures had exacerbated the food insecurity. The closure of the country's border with Libya had negatively affected the livestock market. For over two years, people had been receiving 50 per cent of what they needed to survive. There was malnutrition in the east of the country among the refugees. The country team briefed the Council about the polio epidemic in the Lac Region since July 2016. Council members were informed that UNICEF had been vaccinating people in the border areas with Nigeria since August 2016. The country team said that about half of the population in Chad was below 18 years of age and half of those did not attend school. The country team highlighted its programme of deradicalization, which it conducted in close cooperation with traditional and religious leaders and civil society organizations. It focused on traditional justice systems and worked on rule of law issues in local provinces, with magistrates and with the judiciary. The country team also had specific programmes for women, who made up about 52 per cent of the population. The Government had a quota of 30 per cent for women's representation in decision-making positions. Given that part of the problem was how Chadian women viewed

themselves, there was a need to work on education and sensitization, as well as on curbing child marriages.

40. The Resident Coordinator noted that the United Nations country team was linking humanitarian and development action and strategic planning in cooperation with the Government. This new way of working made sense in Chad, where security concerns around Lake Chad were principally a development issue. The new United Nations Development Assistance Framework took into consideration human vulnerability. The Resident Coordinator highlighted the fact that the Government was suffering from a financial and budgetary crisis and was counting on the monthly support of donors. The Government's new five-year development plan would be presented at a donors' round-table conference in Paris between April and June 2017. The international community was working with the Government to link the plan to humanitarian vulnerabilities.

41. The World Bank representative briefed the Council members on the economic situation in Chad, where, after achieving the heavily indebted poor country conclusion point in 2014, the country's economy was in near collapse following the downturn in oil prices in 2015. The economic situation of the Government was stressed with low fiscal revenues. There were arrears in salary payments, scholarships to students and debt payments to local companies. The banking sector did not want to lend money to the Government. The World Bank had provided budgetary support to Chad in 2015 and 2016, and was looking into doing it again in 2017.

42. The Resident Coordinator commented that Chad maintained a capable and powerful military and security system, which had been a priority for the Government given the threats from the situation in neighbouring countries and from trafficking. In 2015, the focus was completely on security, but this changed in mid-2016, when President Déby Itno made it clear that battling terrorism was about battling poverty and underdevelopment. Since then, the United Nations country team had been in constructive dialogue with the Government regarding the Lake Chad Basin crisis. The Government also maintained positive, engaging relations with the United Nations country team on the Development Assistance Framework and the national development plan. The Government had requested eligibility to access the Peacebuilding Fund, and the United Nations country team was working with the Government and the Peacebuilding Support Office on possible areas of engagement, including social disorder and the political conflicts.

43. Commenting on the role of the African Union in Chad, the Resident Coordinator said that the African Union representative in Chad was advocating for more support to the Multinational Joint Task Force, which still needed considerable support even though it was quite operational. The role of Moussa Faki as the new Chairperson of the African Union Commission would be important in ensuring that Chad and the international community coordinated well with the African Union. The Resident Coordinator added that the United Nations country team maintained a good and open dialogue with the African Union and the European Union missions in Chad. Their analyses were leading to the same conclusions on what needed to be done.

44. The Resident Coordinator reported that since late July/early August 2016, waves of people had surrendered to the Multinational Joint Task Force, identifying themselves as former Boko Haram fighters or family members. By November, there were a total of around 1,200 such defectors, who were placed in a detention centre in Baga Sola. Early in December, the Government returned women and children to their communities of origin. The Resident Coordinator informed the Council that the humanitarian country team had sent a mission to those communities from 10 to 16 February 2017 to assess the conditions of the women and children. The mission reported back that their situation was acceptable, with a few minor protection

issues. The mission however reported that they found a large number of people in villages on the islands of Lake Chad, almost 40,000 on the islands in the southern part of the lake. These villages were believed to have been emptied by the movement of their inhabitants to the mainland. The Resident Coordinator said that the remainder of the detainees had left the detention centre in Baga Sola two weeks previously and the Government had to explain the conditions of their release. A recent mission of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate had a good constructive dialogue with the Government, which wanted support with the triage of the defectors and welcomed long-term capacity-building from the Executive Directorate.

45. At a separate meeting chaired by the Resident Coordinator with a group of national and international NGOs, Council members were briefed on the various areas of operation of those organizations, including food distribution, psychosocial counselling support for those who suffered trauma, and efforts to map out protection challenges in the Lac Region, such as forced marriage and sexual and gender-based violence, especially for children. Some organizations have been contacted by local chiefs conveying the needs and grievances of internally displaced persons living among their community, such as the need for means for subsistence through farming and agricultural support, or to facilitate their return to their villages for short periods to harvest their crops. These requests have mostly been heeded by the local or central authorities. Some NGOs highlighted the lack of Government resources to address the development and early recovery needs of the affected population, adding that on their part they have been trying to serve as a bridge between emergency action and development. They also noted that internally displaced persons were not the only ones affected by the crisis; host communities have had to share their meagre resources with displaced persons. A Chadian NGO highlighted the need for a "transition plan" from humanitarian assistance to development, in order to respond to long-term needs that existed long before the emergence of Boko Haram, namely to provide the affected communities with access to basic social services. Another Chadian NGO stated that the root causes of the crisis were known, adding that what was needed was a return to normalcy for both internally displaced persons and host communities. An international NGO stated that most of the organizations present were emergency actors and that they generally lacked the capacity to ensure a transition from humanitarian assistance to development. Most NGOs made reference to the need to ensure adequate funding for humanitarian and early recovery programmes, some calling for the swift disbursement of pledges made at the Oslo Humanitarian Conference.

46. ICRC highlighted humanitarian access challenges, while noting that, if compared to Nigeria or Cameroon, humanitarian organizations in Chad had better access, with only one insecure zone, namely Baga Sola, that remained inaccessible. ICRC encouraged continued vigilance with regard to counter-insurgency operations and their impact on population movement. Going forward, ICRC stressed the need for Council members to encourage the Government to respect the rule of law and protection of human rights in the course of military operations. On deradicalization, ICRC informed the mission that while it was not involved in such programmes it recognized the importance for humanitarian organizations to become involved. It informed Council members that, during the course of visits to detention centres to assess the conditions of detainees, ICRC representatives caution detainees against joining Boko Haram. Concerning the case of the 1,200 persons who had surrendered, ICRC underscored the need for the Government to define how to determine and care for them, highlighting the need to put in place special measures for women who have borne children to Boko Haram members, and for the communities receiving them.

B. Observations/key messages

47. The members of the Security Council commended Chad for its exemplary efforts and sacrifices made in the fight against Boko Haram. They congratulated Chad for the election of the former Foreign Minister as the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. Council members underscored the need for economic reform as well as fiscal management to enable the Government to address the root causes of the crisis, as well as structural and long-term economic challenges such as poverty, lack of education and social development, while promoting the inclusion and representation of women in the planning and delivery of programmes. They noted the importance of establishing national disarmament, demobilization, deradicalization and reintegration programmes for former Boko Haram members as part of counter-terrorism efforts. In addition to the need to fight terrorism, the Council members recognized the political, institutional, governance and development deficits at the heart of the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin countries and that strengthened development and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes could help to address some of the root causes of the crisis. Council members encouraged the Government to ensure that all counter-terrorism efforts are conducted in full compliance with international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law.

IV. Niger

48. The Security Council visited the Niger on 3 and 4 March. Council members held a meeting with the President, Mahamadou Issoufou, and key Cabinet members. They also met with the United Nations country team as well as the diplomatic community.

A. Niamey

Meeting with the President of the Niger and his Cabinet

49. On 4 March, at his meeting with the members of the Security Council, President Issoufou highlighted the fact that the Niger faced a triple security threat from Mali, Libya and the Lake Chad Basin. He noted that only an inter-Libyan reconciliation process could resolve the situation in that country through a consensus Government and a transition period that would lead to free and fair elections. With regard to the situation in Mali, the President said that there was a need to better combat terrorism and the trafficking of illicit drugs and weapons. He requested the members of the Council to adopt a resolution on the proposed G-5 Sahel regional force and to provide the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali with adequate equipment in order to enable it to carry out its offensive mandate. On the Lake Chad Basin region, the President commended the work of the Multinational Joint Task Force, for which he requested more support from the international community. He mentioned the issue of human trafficking as a relevant problem for the country and the region. He also commended Operation Barkhane and the country's bilateral cooperation with its partners. He also thanked United Nations system entities and non-governmental organizations for their support to the Niger.

50. In addition to the security threats, the President said that the Niger was facing threats from climate change, a drop in the price of commodities, such as oil and minerals, and the economic downturn in the country's major trading partner, Nigeria. He highlighted his Government's Renaissance II programme, which aimed to build democratic institutions. The country needed roads, energy,

telecommunications infrastructure, job creation for the youth and food. Education and health were two top priorities, and the Government was aiming to make education compulsory for children until the age of 16 and was focusing on vocational training. He added that there was also a need to promote democracy and socioeconomic development. The Government had programmes aimed at the empowerment of women and was looking into ending early and forced marriages. There was also a need to tackle the high population growth rate in the country. He highlighted the particular needs of the Diffa Region, noting that his Government had a specific programme targeting that region. He stressed that Boko Haram would not have been able to take root in the Lake Chad Basin region had it not been for the dwindling water resources of Lake Chad, which had an impact on the availability of resources. He expressed support for the economic and development plan of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, particularly with regard to the transfer of water to Lake Chad. The President also stressed that his Government was focusing on three fronts to tackle the Lake Chad Basin crisis: defence, democracy and development. He added that the Government was planning a donors' conference in September 2017 and counted on the support of the Niger's partners.

51. With regard to the issue of those who had surrendered from Boko Haram, the Minister of the Interior informed the mission that the Niger had 138 such cases, 98 of them being young men who came with non-combatant wives. The Government had placed the men into one camp and the women and children into another and they were now placed in a transition camp. The Government had a training programme for these defectors to enhance their job skills and encouraged the United Nations system and bilateral partners to support it in that regard. The Government was also implementing a deradicalization programme for the defectors.

52. The Minister of Planning stated that women's empowerment was a key component of the country's development programme. The Government planned to carry out literacy campaigns to advocate for women's empowerment and was focusing on the education of young girls. It was also focusing on providing support to women and young people in rural areas.

Meetings with the United Nations country team and representatives of the diplomatic corps

53. On 5 March, during a breakfast meeting, the Resident Coordinator briefed the Council members on the negative impact that the Boko Haram crisis has had on the economy and access to basic social services, leading to huge humanitarian consequences. Regional integration had been jeopardized by the crisis. He encouraged the Security Council to acknowledge the role of host communities, which were also vulnerable, yet they had shown solidarity with internally displaced persons. He commended the donor countries and the Government for providing resources to the crisis response and expressed the hope that, as a result of its visit, the Security Council would raise the profile of the crisis. He also expressed the hope that the pledges made during the Oslo Humanitarian Conference and the high-level event on the Lake Chad Basin crisis held on the margins of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly in New York in September 2016 would be translated into real contributions in order to save lives and contribute to development. He informed the Council that the United Nations country team was paving the way for new ways of working, including through the strengthening of the humanitarian and development nexus. He added that the resilience approach should be integrated into humanitarian assistance. He stressed the need for heavy investment in youth employment and women's empowerment. He noted that the country's sustainable development and sustainable growth strategy was in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Resident Coordinator said that education was linked

to vocational training, which would unlock economic opportunities. The education of women and girls would contribute towards ending early marriage and early pregnancy. It was needed to build citizenship and would also have a negative impact on the number of children that women had. The Resident Coordinator stated that institution-building by the Government, with civil society and NGOs playing a role and access to basic social services, would create an environment conducive to activities and investment by the private sector. He stressed that human rights were at the forefront of what the United Nations country team was doing. It wanted to ensure that human rights were protected and that women and children were protected. He pleaded for the Niger to be at the top of the development community's priority list, given that the country stood at the bottom of the human development index.

54. Representatives of the diplomatic corps stated that the Lake Chad Basin region was already facing problems related to the shrinking of Lake Chad, which had an impact on the local populations and affected their livelihoods. This situation was exacerbated by Boko Haram. The members of the Lake Chad Basin Commission had done their utmost to secure their borders and had come to the aid of the affected populations. They requested genuine support from the international community. They highlighted the effect of the crisis in Mali on the Niger and requested the Security Council's support to the decision of the G-5 Sahel on establishing a regional force. Representatives of the diplomatic corps said that security expenditure in the Niger had risen exponentially owing to the triple crisis caused by the situation in Mali, Libya and the Lake Chad Basin. There was a need to address the education system in the Niger, particularly the education of girls, as well as for a profound change in mindsets. There was also a need to tackle the population explosion in the country as a result of which 3,000 to 4,000 schools needed to be built each year just to keep up with the natural growth in the number of school-entering children. Council members took note of the European Union's support to the Niger, including through projects implemented in partnership with UNHCR. Representatives of the diplomatic corps also expressed concern at the impact of trafficking in humans, weapons and drugs. Representatives of the diplomatic corps encouraged the international community to focus on migration from sub-Saharan Africa, pointing out that thousands of citizens of the Niger were crossing the Sahara, which was "an open air cemetery". The issue of migration could not be delinked from that of trafficking and smuggling. The World Bank stressed that the security issue should be viewed as a public good.

55. The United Nations country team noted that the Diffa Region was structurally vulnerable, with the lowest access rate to basic social services in the country, which was already not high. Given that Government funding was moving to the security sector, there were problems with the payment of salaries to civil servants. The country team was undertaking joint efforts with the Government to ensure that protection was linked to sustainable solutions. There were many protection challenges in the Niger. The Government was talking of possible returns, but there was a need for protection safeguards and basic conditions. The issue of protection needed to be linked to education, livelihoods, peaceful coexistence and economic opportunities.

56. Representatives of the humanitarian country team said that there were more than 200,000 displaced people in the Diffa Region, who lived in makeshift camps with minimum basic services. What was needed was for the international community to strengthen the link between humanitarian and development issues.

B. Observations/key messages

57. The members of the Security Council observed that the Lake Chad Basin crisis was one of three major security threats facing the Niger, in addition to the situation

in Libya and Mali, as well as the consequences of drugs and human trafficking. They further observed the interconnectedness of all those factors. They noted that the Diffa Region of the Niger, the epicentre of Boko Haram's activities in the country, was the country's poorest area with the least access to basic services. Members of the Council stressed that terrorism could not be tackled without tackling poverty, ensuring the protection of civilians, respecting human rights, education and health, empowering women and girls and creating job opportunities, particularly for the youth. They stressed that there was a need for a holistic, comprehensive and inclusive approach to fight Boko Haram. In that regard, the members of the Council welcomed the Niger's Renaissance II programme and the Government's focus on enhancing defence, democracy and development, particularly in the Diffa Region. They welcomed, in particular, the Government's programmes on empowering women, as well as its efforts in curbing early and forced marriages and in ensuring that girls stayed in school longer.

V. Nigeria

58. From 5 to 7 March, the Security Council visited Nigeria. Council members conducted a field visit to Maiduguri where they visited a camp for internally displaced persons and met with the Governor of Borno State and the Sector 3 Theatre Commander of the Multinational Joint Task Force. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria participated in the latter two meetings. Security Council members also met with United Nations actors. Council members also travelled to Abuja for meetings with the Acting President, Cabinet members, women legislators, the United Nations country team, civil society organizations and the diplomatic corps, as well as the ECCAS and ECOWAS leadership.

A. Maiduguri

59. On 5 March, the Security Council travelled to Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State — the hotbed of violence by the terrorist group Boko Haram. After exploring the humanitarian hub, the "Red Roof", that accommodates United Nations and international NGO personnel operating in north-eastern Nigeria, Council members visited the internally displaced persons camp known as "Teachers Village", which is one of 75 camps in and around Maiduguri that house some 7,100 internally displaced persons. According to figures provided by the United Nations humanitarian team, of the 1.5 million internally displaced persons in Borno State, 16 per cent live in camps, while the remaining 84 per cent are with host communities. Council members also held meetings with the humanitarian community, the Sector 3 Theatre Commander of the Multinational Joint Task Force and the Governor of Borno State.

Visit to the Teachers Village internally displaced persons camp

60. At Teachers Village, Council members met with two separate groups of internally displaced persons — women and men, as well as with a group of women's civil society organizations. During the meeting with a group of women living in the camp, Council members heard a number of personal stories of how they were affected by the conflict, and about the camp conditions and humanitarian assistance provided.

61. One woman spoke about how Boko Haram had killed both her husband and 17-year-old daughter and two of her grandchildren. Another woman said that Boko Haram had abducted her 16-year-old daughter almost two years previously. Almost all women in the group had children abducted or husbands killed by Boko Haram.

and most of them were the heads of their households. Concerning the living conditions in the internally displaced persons camp, their main concerns were poor quality and inadequate food rations (oil, rice, beans, biscuits, etc.) provided by the Government agency concerned, the National Emergency Management Agency, as well as poor quality education despite the existence of a primary school in the camp, and lack of medical care, since the health clinic in the camp was not able to provide medication beyond paracetamol. A woman who had been living in the camp for two years and four months explained that, while security in the camp was adequate, the food provided for her family of seven was insufficient, sometimes not lasting three days, forcing her to beg in town. She also added that most women fetched dry grass for cooking in lieu of firewood that was hard to obtain. The majority of women also complained about the lack of income-generating activities which would allow them to obtain enough food and hygienic products and seek medical care for their families, forcing most women to beg. One woman explained that she was a civil servant in a hospital when Boko Haram attacked her town, where she lost everything; she now remains idle with no work, and having to care for her young children and elderly parents. A young girl passionately explained the need for some form of work for women and girls in the form of handiwork, similar to the activities carried out by the International Organization for Migration in the camp. She also advocated for quality education for children.

62. When asked about their views of Boko Haram and if they knew some of them, most women said that they were unknown to them; some explained that among Boko Haram members were boys who had been abducted by the group and forced to fight. They expressed the hope that their abducted children, about whom they had no information, would be released and reunited with them.

63. The group of internally displaced men also complained that they were not receiving enough food from the Government, adding that the quality of the food was poor. They expressed their frustration at being idle, with no form of employment after having been used to run businesses and farm in their home villages. They expressed the wish to return to their homes to lead normal lives, noting however that those who had been relocated by the Government to host communities were not being assisted.

64. At the meeting with women's civil society organizations, representatives presented a number of issues affecting women and children to Council members. They elaborated on the issues of sexual exploitation and sexual violence especially affecting girls, and emphasized the importance of psychosocial support for victims of the conflict. In this connection they informed the Council that in the light of reports of sexual abuse of internally displaced women, they lobbied with the authorities for female security for one of the internally displaced persons camps [name not provided]. They further explained that the biggest challenge in addressing cases of sexual violence was women's fear of speaking out. They also highlighted the need for skilled female teachers and briefed the Council about the lack of education opportunities for girls such as scholarships at private schools where the quality of education was good, while appealing for support to internally displaced persons in host communities and not only those residing in camps. Council members were also briefed on the various health initiatives organized, such as sensitization programmes for personal hygiene and family-planning counselling. They explained that there were many areas of need such as cancer screening, safe abortions for rape victims, safe space for women previously associated with Boko Haram, and special centres for single elderly women, among others. The need to focus on peacebuilding among the community to resolve conflicts between host communities and internally displaced persons was also highlighted, as were issues related to the stigmatization or rejection of former Boko Haram girls and their children. One of the women, Fatima Askira, Head of the Borno Women's Association, informed Council members

that during the Oslo Humanitarian Conference for Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region there was an agreement to establish a women's network in the Lake Chad Basin region, to exchange information, views and lessons learned given the common challenge they face.

65. The women's civil society organizations reported the difficulties they face in obtaining funding, which has proved more challenging given that they have to compete against international NGOs for donor funding. They appealed to Council members to allocate or earmark funding for women's civil society organizations, which are more knowledgeable of the local needs and customs, and close to the affected communities. Lastly they requested Council members to convey their request to the Government of Nigeria to support a strategy they had developed, which was to be launched globally in the third week of March, for funding purposes. They also appealed to Council members to encourage the domestication of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) at the state level, following its ratification at the federal level in Nigeria.

Meeting with the humanitarian community

66. At a meeting chaired by the United Nations Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator with the participation of representatives of the United Nations humanitarian country team, international NGOs and civil society organizations, Council members were briefed about the scale and challenges of the efforts to avoid a famine in the north-east. The Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator added that the level of the humanitarian crisis within the United Nations was L5, the same level as that for the crises in Aleppo, Syrian Arab Republic, Sanaa and Kabul. He explained the urgency of funding to be provided to the humanitarian operations in the north-east, adding that the World Food Programme (WFP) would no longer be able to deliver food aid by the end of March for lack of funds. He added that over 455,000 children were acutely malnourished and that, should food distributions stop, their situation would deteriorate rapidly. In response to a query related to the use of a cash-based transfer system as opposed to food distributions, WFP explained that those systems were feasible only in stable locations, where there are food and non-food items to purchase, but were not practical in distant, remote areas.

67. The Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator informed the Council that, despite the return of over 1 million internally displaced persons to their areas of origin since August 2015, the number of displaced persons continued to grow, with new displacements, indicating that the conflict was still active. During the meeting, concerns were raised by humanitarian partners about the use of armed military escorts for the delivery of humanitarian aid and the need for unhindered humanitarian access, especially for newly liberated areas, where some 700,000 people in eight local government areas are estimated to be inaccessible. Concerning reports/deadline concerning the closure of some internally displaced persons camps in Maiduguri by the Government, the Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator stressed that returns should not be associated with a date, but rather be guided by conditions conducive for return. He appealed to the Security Council to convey the message to the authorities that the secondary displacement of internally displaced persons to transit areas that lack the most basic social services was to be avoided, adding that returns must be voluntary. He also cautioned Council members not to forget the men, while also focusing on the fate of women.

68. The Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator also explained the efforts undertaken to integrate the work of the United Nations agencies and other international organizations, by applying a multisectoral approach and dividing the tasks among the humanitarian communities. He also noted that the eight humanitarian hubs being

established across Borno State, of which Red Roof was one, were not just for the use of the United Nations system but for all humanitarian actors.

69. The Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator noted the high cost associated with the humanitarian operations in the north-east, explaining that these were related to utilizing helicopters for travel to hard-to-reach and insecure areas both for assessments and delivery of aid. He explained that the establishment of eight hubs across Borno State was meant to help to reduce these costs. He further added that maintaining the hubs was expensive.

70. ICRC briefed the Council about the harsh conditions or environment that people live in, where there are no development or economic opportunities and there are cyclical droughts. He added that, at best, these people were "living on edge", where millions of lives have been affected and are dependent on the support of humanitarian organizations to survive. ICRC also explained that, while there had been some improvement in the security situation, it still remained volatile, thus preventing ICRC from reaching all affected areas. He noted that protection concerns remained, such as sexual exploitation and abuses against women. ICRC reported that in 2017 it had shifted its programming from emergency to early recovery and livelihood and agricultural programmes, to ensure that beneficiaries become self-sufficient and not dependent on food aid.

71. A spokesperson for civil society organizations conveyed three messages. He urged the involvement of internally displaced persons, civil society organizations and religious institutions in the planning and decision-making processes, especially for reconstruction activities; stressed the need for psychosocial support to the affected populations; and appealed for recovery and livelihood opportunities, especially for women, in the affected communities, where poverty is rampant and people live on less than $1 a day.

72. A non-governmental organization working on the protection of civilians in conflict briefed the Council about three areas of concern surrounding operations against Boko Haram: (a) security forces fail to protect civilians from harm; (b) civilians are directly and indirectly harmed during military operations; and (c) military forces are committing human rights violations. The NGO representative said that levels of sexual exploitation and abuse were high in camps for the displaced and that this was related to the insufficiency in the quantity and quality of the food being distributed. Sexual exploitation and abuse also took place in newly accessible areas. Other forms of violence were also being committed against women and girls, including forced marriage and domestic violence. The NGO representative also expressed support to the Tripartite Agreement between Cameroon, Nigeria and UNHCR, describing it as very promising, against the backdrop of a Government decision to close internally displaced persons camps in the north-east, and possible forcible relocation to transit camps.

Meeting with the Theatre Commander of Operation Lafiya Dole

73. Council members received a briefing about military operations in north-eastern Nigeria by the Theatre Commander of the Multinational Joint Task Force. He stated to Council members that Boko Haram had been "decimated", their hideout in the Sambisa forest taken over, but that "remnants" of the group remained, largely around Lake Chad. In this context, he informed the Council that military operations were currently focused on the shores of Lake Chad, to ensure the final eradication of the group, while at the same time securing the Sambisa forest to prevent Boko Haram's return. He noted the cooperation of the Nigerian Operation Lafiya Dole, which he oversees, with the forces of other countries, either bilaterally or through the Multinational Joint Task Force. According to the Theatre Commander, the

greatest challenges the Task Force faces are from improvised explosive devices planted by Boko Haram, and from suicide bombers.

74. The Multinational Joint Task Force Theatre Commander, alluding to the reports of human rights violations by Nigerian forces throughout the conflict, highlighted the code of conduct and rules of engagement that soldiers must abide by, adding that disciplinary measures applied for those that do not do so. He also updated Council members regarding an investigation of an air strike on a displaced persons camp in Rann, Borno State, on 17 January, that killed more than 100 civilians. According to the investigation's findings, the military had been given information that Boko Haram was in the area, triggering the strike. Although he acknowledged that the strike on the camp was unacceptable, the group's presence was demonstrated by a Boko Haram attack in Rann two days later. In response to some of the questions members asked about humanitarian access, the Task Force Theatre Commander said that the only time that humanitarian actors may not be able to go to some areas is when there may be ongoing military operations. He further added that he was not aware of any "no-go" areas that were inaccessible to the humanitarian community, adding that the military was providing escorts to ensure access to remote areas. He also said that displaced persons had not yet returned to their former communities because of the trauma that had been experienced, not because places were unsafe. He introduced two girls, unsuccessful suicide bombers who were rescued from their fate, and a young man whose hand was amputated by Boko Haram to punish him for counselling the population against joining the group.

Meeting with the Governor of Borno State

75. At the end of the day, the Council delegation met with the Governor of Borno State, Kashim Shettima. In attendance was the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, Geoffrey Onyeama. At the start of his remarks, he expressed his condolences for the loss of the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations. He expressed appreciation of the Council's visit, adding that he was recently in Oslo participating in the Humanitarian Conference for the Lake Chad Basin region. He expressed the hope that the United Nations would continue to partner with Nigeria to support initiatives that respond to Boko Haram activities. He also hoped that pledges committed in Oslo would be swiftly disbursed. However, the Governor criticized the focus of humanitarian support on internally displaced persons in camps, as opposed to focusing on those residing in host communities, who make up the majority of displaced persons. The Governor outlined the destruction caused by Boko Haram, including over $9 billion in damage to north-eastern Nigeria, which included, inter alia, the destruction of over 963,000 homes in Borno State, comprising 30 per cent of the housing stock, more than 500 primary schools, over 1,600 water sources, and more than 200 health facilities.

76. The Governor emphasized that the problem of Boko Haram was related to a crisis of extreme poverty and a lack of jobs, and had "nothing to do with Islam". He pointed out that north-eastern Nigeria and the countries of the Lake Chad region, along with Darfur, are some of the poorest places on earth. The Governor told Council members that he believed the crisis presented an opportunity to re-engineer society in north-eastern Nigeria. He said that some of his main priorities are gender empowerment and education of girls, and went on to describe policies and incentives to promote education. The Governor highlighted the problem of the demographic boom in northern Nigeria, which would make Nigeria more populous than the United States by 2050. He suggested that north-eastern Nigeria needed a Marshall Plan, and implored Council members to give the crisis the attention that it deserved. He suggested that the focus should be on post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction, as opposed to a continued focus on the humanitarian emergency,

since the insurgency was gradually coming to an end. He predicted that there would be peace in the coming 9 to 10 months.

77. Council members welcomed the Governor's briefing, while emphasizing the need to move from vision to implementation. Several Council members posed questions, including on how to deal with stigmatization as well as cooperation with the United Nations humanitarian community. In response, the Governor noted that psychosocial support was crucial, acknowledging the pivotal role of the United Nations in addressing the humanitarian needs, but reiterated his views on the need to provide more support for internally displaced persons in host communities. He concluded by urging the United Nations to scale up its operations in the north-east.

B. Abuja

Meeting with the Acting President of Nigeria and the Cabinet

78. At his meeting with members of the Security Council, the Vice-President of Nigeria, in his capacity as Acting President, noted that the situation in north-eastern Nigeria and the Lake Chad region was a massive challenge for Nigeria, adding that the Nigerian Government, in cooperation with international and regional partners, was committed to resolving the crisis. He said that the military challenge was no longer the main concern, as Boko Haram had by and large been defeated as a military force and had now resorted to asymmetric warfare, including through ambushes and occasional suicide attacks. As a result, the Government was now focusing on dealing with the long-term issues, including changing the ideology perversion that had given rise to the group. He highlighted the Government's programmes on addressing good governance, education, health and infrastructure projects, particularly in the north-east, which, if not addressed, could lead to a pool of young people being conscripted by the ideology of movements such as Boko Haram. The Acting President informed the Council of a cash transfer programme for vulnerable populations in the north-east and a focus on rehabilitating agricultural business in that area. Council members took note that 40,000 youth had registered in the Government's youth empowerment programme, some of them involved in teaching and public health. The Acting President noted that the Presidential Committee on north-eastern Nigeria was an umbrella mechanism for coordinating the work of state and federal government agencies. Concerning human rights, the Acting President expressed the Government's commitment to ensuring that human rights were respected by the military and law enforcement agencies, adding that each member of the military and law enforcement agency was given special training in dealing with human rights issues. Moreover, the military had put in place several programmes to focus on human rights issues, particularly on engagement with insurgencies. The Acting President opined that international conventions on warfare were behind in categorizing the terrorists, who were not "armed combatants" in the old sense of the term. He stressed that the Government was firmly committed to the protection of women and children and said that anyone found responsible for violations against women and children would be held accountable. The Acting President highlighted the dwindling of the water resources of Lake Chad as a huge challenge for those depending on the lake for their livelihoods. He expressed the hope that the international community would work with Nigeria on that issue. He commended the holding of the Oslo Humanitarian Conference and looked forward to more assistance. He called for more support from partners in providing military equipment and weapons for fighting the remnants of Boko Haram. Security Council members applauded Nigeria's commitment to allocate $1 billion for the north-east and enquired about how the funds will be disbursed. Council members emphasized the need to address the root causes of the crisis, including the need for good

governance, compliance with human rights, ensuring the empowerment of women and enacting effective economic revival, education and job opportunities.

79. The Minister of Defence, present at the meeting, highlighted the successes in the fight against Boko Haram and noted that the countries of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Benin had come together under the umbrella of the Multinational Joint Task Force to fight Boko Haram. He thanked France, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States for providing assistance with the regional intelligence unit based in Abuja. He assured Council members that the Nigerian armed forces would combat Boko Haram in a proportional manner and in compliance with international law. He called on the United Nations to consider strengthening the Multinational Joint Task Force. He also called on the Security Council to assist and attract international support for counter-terrorism efforts in north-eastern Nigeria.

Meeting with the Minister of Budget and National Planning

80. At his meeting with the Security Council members, the Minister of Budget and National Planning highlighted the fact that two coordination mechanisms had been set up by the Government, namely the interministerial coordination committee, headed by his ministry, and the Presidential Committee on north-eastern Nigeria. He noted that in the short term there was a need for food, medicine, shelter and water for affected populations in north-eastern Nigeria. He added that there was also a need to move to more medium-term needs, including the construction of roads, rehabilitating infrastructure, schools and hospitals. He highlighted the negative impact of the oil slump and the ensuing economic recession on Government finances, which was exacerbated by the vandalism of oil pipelines in the Niger Delta. He noted that the Government's economic recovery and growth plan aimed at stabilizing the macroeconomic framework and addressing the issue of severe shortages. North-eastern Nigeria was a priority, but the Government needed technical and financial support to carry out its programmes. The Minister reassured Council members that the humanitarian response was coordinated, with regular meetings between relevant ministries and coordination with state Governments. On the issue of granting visas to humanitarian organizations, the Minister acknowledged that there had been a backlog of cases and said that the Government was determined to resolve the issue. In response to a question on Nigeria's commitment of $1 billion to the north-east, the Minister said that the exact figure could not be determined until the national budget was passed by the National Assembly. The total amount would include all the concerned States' budgets and the federal budget dedicated to the north-east. The National Assembly was expected to pass the budget within three weeks. Once the budget was approved, not all funds would be available immediately, but they would be spread out over the duration of the budget. The Minister highlighted the Government's actions in attracting private sector investment, particularly for north-eastern Nigeria. He noted that the Government was determined to tackle corruption, adding that its anti-corruption drive had produced noticeable results. He appealed for international support for the Government's programmes in Nigeria, particularly in the north-east, noting that the Government was determined to bring about change in a fundamental way.

Meeting with women parliamentarians

81. At their meeting with Security Council members, women parliamentarians from both houses of the National Assembly highlighted the challenges that they faced in their work and in pushing forward women's issues in the country, particularly the issues of women in north-eastern Nigeria. Council members were informed that there was a lack of commitment to an affirmative action bill for

women's representation in all branches of Government. The women parliamentarians stated that women faced cultural and religious obstacles to attaining equality in Nigeria and that many of them were not financially independent. Without the financial and moral support of their husbands or parents, women had no chance of being elected to political office. They stressed the importance of focusing on education and health issues for women in the north-east. In that regard, they welcomed the Supreme Court's decision to make education mandatory, which was a step in the right direction. They said that the proliferation of small arms and light weapons was a real problem in the Lake Chad Basin region and that the Security Council should not ignore piracy and illegal trafficking that originated in the Gulf of Guinea. Commenting on the composition of the Security Council delegation, one parliamentarian expressed the view that those who believed in women's empowerment needed to be at the forefront and that "charity begins at home". The parliamentarians highlighted the plight of girls who returned from Boko Haram and faced challenges reintegrating into their communities, including some of the rescued Chibok girls, who were being rejected by their communities and were not receiving any help.

Meeting with the United Nations country team and the humanitarian country team

82. The Resident Coordinator noted that the Nigerian economy was in recession and that the Government had finalized an economic recovery and growth plan that would focus on macroeconomic stability; growth and diversification; improving competitiveness; and fostering social inclusion. On the political front, the Government was focusing on tackling corruption and graft, addressing insecurity with a focus on north-eastern Nigeria and improving the economy. The Resident Coordinator highlighted pockets of insecurity in the country, namely the Boko Haram insurgency in the north-east, the crisis between herders and farmers in the Middle Belt and the situation in the Niger Delta, where oil pipelines were being vandalized. Human rights challenges included the fact that national institutions for human rights procedures were weak; there was a dysfunctional criminal justice system; pervasive impunity; and ongoing insurgency and pockets of insecurity in parts of the country. The Resident Coordinator noted that, while there was a focus by the international community on protection, food insecurity and the nutrition crisis, there was a need for more international advocacy in support of counter-terrorism efforts and the protection of women and children. He further stressed the need for more funding for the humanitarian response and urged donors that had made pledges at the Oslo Humanitarian Conference to translate their pledges into actual funds. He also encouraged the participation of non-traditional donors. The Resident Coordinator noted that the food and nutrition crisis was alarming: 5.1 million people needed food assistance, 8.5 million people needed humanitarian assistance, 6.9 million people were being targeted by the United Nations in 2017 and 14 million people were affected by the Boko Haram crisis in the States of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. The Resident Coordinator asserted that a three-pronged approach was needed to tackle Boko Haram: a military aspect complemented by a political process with durable solutions; addressing the immense short-term needs; and addressing the root causes of the crisis.

83. On the issue of coordination within the Government of Nigeria and between humanitarian actors, the Resident Coordinator noted that much was happening in that regard. On the former, the Government had set up two coordination bodies: an inter-ministerial task force and the Presidential Committee on north-eastern Nigeria. On coordination between humanitarian actors, the leadership architecture was in place, but there was a need to do more on intersectoral coordination. The United Nations country team had piloted a multisectoral approach to address the Boko

Haram crisis and was implementing the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit held in 2016, including bridging the humanitarian and development divide. On the Government's funding commitment, the Resident Coordinator noted that, according to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Nigeria had dedicated $2.77 billion in 2016 to the north-east, mostly to the military effort. Almost $623 million had been allocated in the 2017 budget for north-eastern Nigeria, with an overall budget, at federal and state levels, of $1 billion to tackle the Boko Haram crisis.

84. Humanitarian non-governmental organizations noted difficulties of registration, obtaining visas and importing humanitarian supplies. The issue of humanitarian access in Borno State was also highlighted. The view was expressed that military escorts put humanitarian workers at risk and that those organizations willing to take on an increased risk should be allowed to deliver aid without an escort. The view was expressed that a military strategy against Boko Haram needed to be accompanied by a political strategy and a focus on the protection of civilians. Non-governmental organizations stressed the need of ensuring that the return of all refugees and internally displaced persons remained voluntary, safe, dignified and based on a set of minimum favourable conditions.

Meeting with members of the diplomatic corps

85. Representatives of the diplomatic corps highlighted the marginalization of northern Nigeria, including a lack of job opportunities for youth, no basic services and mistrust between political and religious authorities, which created a fertile ground for radicalization. It was also important to look beyond humanitarian relief in north-eastern Nigeria and focus on stabilization and reconstruction. They stressed that there was a need for an integrated approach that went beyond the Lake Chad Basin region, noting that Nigeria was key to the situation in the region and deserved the due attention of the Security Council. They noted that a consultative group had been set up involving the co-hosts of the Oslo Humanitarian Conference as well as the four affected countries and that it would be important to enlarge that group and make it more open. Representatives of the diplomatic corps cautioned that the crisis in the north-east and the economic recession in the country could lead to more migration to Europe. They highlighted the problem of some religious authorities preaching violence and extremism, which needed to be tackled by the Government. The view was expressed that sometimes certain messages to the Government and other parties would be better received if they did not emanate from the United Nations or western countries.

Meeting with civil society organizations

86. At their meeting with members of the Security Council, Nigerian civil society organizations noted that long-term funding was a major challenge for them. They stressed that there was a need for a change in mindsets to tackle the problem of Boko Haram. North-eastern Nigeria had the lowest education attainment rate for women and girls in the country and the highest maternal mortality rates. More women were needed in local Governments across the country, particularly in north-eastern Nigeria. The civil society organizations regretted that a gender equality bill had not been adopted in the National Assembly. They highlighted the particular impact of the Boko Haram crisis on women and girls, including pregnant and breast-feeding women, who were dying in internally displaced persons camps because they did not have enough food. They called for more women to be employed in security agencies to protect women in those camps, as some camp and security officials were involved in sexual exploitation and abuse. They also called for more women in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Security Council members took note of microfinance schemes for women in north-eastern Nigeria and the provision of

non-formal education in internally displaced persons camps. Representatives of civil society organizations called for traditional mechanisms to reconcile people and a focus on reintegrating Boko Haram defectors into their communities. They noted that preventing violent extremism was essential and there was a need to focus on religious organizations and regulate some extreme religious narratives. Civil society organizations expressed the concern that some of the funding for the north-east was being siphoned off and there was a need to ensure that the funding reached its intended target with full transparency and accountability.

Meeting with the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of Central African States

87. The members of the Security Council visited the headquarters of ECOWAS, where they met with the Vice-President of the ECOWAS Commission and other ECOWAS Commissioners, as well as with the Secretary-General of ECCAS. The Vice-President of ECOWAS expressed concern at the possibility of ISIL/Da'esh finding fertile grounds in sub-Saharan Africa and a vulnerable youthful population, noting that the problem was not limited to the Lake Chad Basin region. He noted that there was a need to look at things in a holistic manner. He said that the ECOWAS Commission was trying to recommend that the Heads of State of the subregional organization adopt a clear strategy for the protection of internally displaced persons that would include resilience and food security and allow the setting up of a humanitarian fund for internally displaced persons. The Vice-President highlighted ECOWAS capacity-building and training programmes for its member States to combat Boko Haram and other terrorist threats. He noted that ECOWAS and ECCAS would be working towards a joint strategy on Boko Haram and were waiting for directives from their Heads of State for a joint summit to push the issue forward. The Secretary-General of ECCAS highlighted the subregional organization's engagement on the Lake Chad Basin crisis, including the preparation of a draft strategy, in consultation with ECOWAS, on fighting Boko Haram. He noted that ECCAS maintained informal contacts with the G-5 Sahel, adding that ECCAS and ECOWAS needed to work together more closely. Both the ECOWAS Vice-President and the ECCAS Secretary-General welcomed the cooperation that they had with the United Nations system, particularly with the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa.

C. Observations/key messages

88. The members of the Security Council observed that the Lake Chad Basin crisis was one of the main security challenges being tackled by the Government of Nigeria, in addition to the crisis in the Niger Delta and other pockets of insecurity around the country. They commended the efforts of the Government in its fight against Boko Haram as well as its response to the humanitarian and development crises in the north-east of the country. They encouraged bilateral and multilateral donors to make more resources available for these efforts. Members of the Security Council welcomed the Government's pledge of making available $1 billion for north-eastern Nigeria and encouraged it to disburse those funds as soon as possible. They welcomed the Government's economic recovery and growth plan. They also encouraged the Government to create the conditions conducive to domestic and international private sector investment in the north-east. In that regard, they welcomed the Government's anti-corruption drive, as well as the adoption of a code of conduct on human rights for the Nigerian armed forces, and encouraged the Government to make public the findings of the investigation into the tragic events of 17 January 2017 in Rann, Borno State.

89. The members of the Security Council observed that humanitarian agencies in north-eastern Nigeria were working in an extremely insecure environment. They called on the Government to provide unhindered humanitarian access, particularly in liberated local government areas. They stressed that all counter-terrorism efforts must comply with international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law. The members of the Council welcomed the setting up of coordination mechanisms by the Government, namely the interministerial coordination committee and the Presidential Committee on north-eastern Nigeria. Council members stressed the need for increased participation of women in decision-making roles and all efforts to build peace and prevent conflict. The members of the Council were concerned about widespread sexual and gender-based violence both within and outside internally displaced persons camps, particularly against women and young girls. They called on the authorities to take adequate measures in this regard to ensure the protection of women and young girls.

90. The members of the Security Council welcomed the signing on 2 March 2017 of a Tripartite Agreement between UNHCR and the Governments of Nigeria and Cameroon, stressing that any return of refugees must be voluntary, dignified and safe, must meet minimum conditions and must be carried out in coordination with humanitarian agencies.

VI. Conclusion

91. Key messages conveyed by the Governments of the Lake Chad Basin countries were similar. They acknowledged the continued threat by Boko Haram, despite its degraded capability as a result of operations by the Multinational Joint Task Force and their national armies. They stressed that the military efforts had severely drained their meagre resources in the context of a deep financial crisis affecting the region. This, in turn, had limited their ability to address the humanitarian, socioeconomic and development needs of the affected populations. While welcoming the outcome of the Oslo Humanitarian Conference and the pledges made, they called for the international community's support to national development efforts, to ensure a holistic and integrated approach in response to the crisis. They also stressed the negative impact of illicit trafficking of weapons, drugs and persons on the region. Chad, the Niger and Nigeria cited the need to address the effects of climate change on Lake Chad and the need to support the Lake Chad Basin Commission's project to resuscitate the lake, given its impact on the local economy.

92. The humanitarian community highlighted the inadequate funding that limits its ability to address the growing needs, noting that the $1.5 billion humanitarian response plan for the entire region in 2017 was only 1.8 per cent funded thus far. It also stressed challenges related to access and the use of military escorts in hard-to-reach areas. United Nations country teams in all four countries pleaded for increased early recovery and development efforts in order to be effective and to address the root causes of the crisis.

Annex I

Composition of the Security Council mission to the Lake Chad Basin region (Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria)

Ambassador René Ernesto Fernández Revollo (Bolivia (Plurinational State of))
Mr. Shen Bo (China)
Ambassador Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta (Egypt)
Ambassador Tekeda Alemu (Ethiopia)
Ambassador François Delattre (France)
Mr. Alexis Lamek (France)
Ambassador Inigo Lambertini (Italy)
Ambassador Yoshifumi Okamura (Japan)
Ambassador Kairat Umarov (Kazakhstan)
Ambassador Fodé Seck (Senegal)
Ambassador Carl Orrenius Skau (Sweden)
Mr. Yuriy Vitrenko (Ukraine)
Ambassador Matthew Rycroft (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Ambassador Michele Sison (United States of America)
Ambassador Luis Homero Bermúdez Álvarez (Uruguay)

* *Note:* The Russian Federation was represented by its Embassies in Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria.

Annex II

Terms of reference of the Security Council mission to the Lake Chad Basin region (Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria)

1. The Security Council will carry out its mission to the countries of the Lake Chad Basin — Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria — in the context of the presidential statements of 19 January 2015 (S/PRST/2015/4), 28 July 2015 (S/PRST/2015/14), 13 May 2016 (S/PRST/2016/7) and 20 January 2017 (S/PRST/2017/2) and in line with the letters dated 29 December 2016 (S/2016/1129) and 21 July 2015 (S/2015/555) from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General.

2. The terms of reference of the mission are the following:

Security

(a) To assess the security situation in the countries of the Lake Chad Basin, namely Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria, in particular the threat posed by the terrorist groups Boko Haram and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh), and the potential impact on the wider region;

(b) To commend Governments in the region on their efforts, including through the Multinational Joint Task Force, and the advances made to combat Boko Haram; to encourage the Member States participating in the Task Force to further enhance regional military cooperation and coordination, building on the conclusions of the second Regional Security Summit, held in May 2016, and in particular to consolidate military gains, strengthen cooperation and confidence-building with civilians, deny safe haven to all factions of Boko Haram and disrupt its links with other transnational and transregional terrorist groups; and to underscore how such efforts enable humanitarian access and facilitate the restoration of State authority and the rule of law in liberated areas;

(c) To receive briefings from the Governments in the region on their assessment of the effectiveness of measures taken to combat the threats, their current strategies and their predicted challenges and recommendations for further strengthening; to encourage the Economic Community of Central African States and the Economic Community of West African States, in coordination with the African Union, to accelerate current joint efforts to combat the threat posed by Boko Haram and to adopt a common strategy that addresses the drivers of the conflict; and to stress the need for Member States in the Lake Chad Basin region to complement the regional military and security operations against Boko Haram and ISIL with national and regional efforts, with the assistance of bilateral partners and multilateral organizations;

(d) To express deep concern about the deadly attacks continuing to be perpetrated by Boko Haram and ISIL, most recently in Borno State, targeting civilians on 28 January and the Nigerian military on 25 January;

(e) To emphasize the need for enhanced protection of civilians, in particular for internally displaced persons, and for an end to sexual exploitation and abuse in camps for internally displaced persons; and to stress that those responsible for all violations of international humanitarian law and abuses and violations of human rights must be held accountable and brought to justice;

(f) To acknowledge that women and girls are particularly targeted by Boko Haram and ISIL and to welcome the recent escape or release of 23 girls kidnapped by Boko Haram from Chibok in 2014; to encourage the continuing efforts to release the 197 girls remaining in captivity and all those abducted by Boko Haram during

the conflict; to call upon all State and non-State actors to prevent and/or cease the abduction, recruitment and use and detention of children in violation of international law; to stress that it is important for the authorities to provide all survivors of abduction and sexual violence with rapid access to appropriate services and community reintegration to prevent the stigmatization of former captives or their children and to protect them from persecution or vigilante action; and to ensure that efforts are made to respond to reports of sexual exploitation and abuse of women in camps for internally displaced persons;

(g) To stress that any measures taken to counter terrorism, including by government forces and civilian joint task forces, must comply with obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, and to call for accountability for those responsible for violations or abuses; to commend the Abuja Action Statement of June 2016 and inquire about its implementation; to express regret at the tragic incident in Rann, north-eastern Nigeria, on 17 January, which resulted in the death of numerous civilians, including aid workers, and to urge swift action to improve the protection of civilians, including through action on the findings of the investigation being conducted by the Nigerian authorities; and to commend the Government of Nigeria on its rapid call for an investigation into the sexual abuse and exploitation of internally displaced people in camps and to inquire about outcomes and next steps to address the matter;

(h) To highlight the need to increase the number of women in the police and the military so as to improve access to information and the protection of women and girls, especially in the light of the increased use of female suicide bombers;

(i) To address the connection between terrorist activities in the region and other transnational organized criminal activities and trafficking in all forms;

(j) To receive briefings from Governments in the region on their conflict prevention efforts, with the support of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, and to emphasize the support of the Security Council for those efforts;

Humanitarian

(k) To reiterate deep concern at the dire humanitarian situation in the Lake Chad Basin region, to welcome recent reports of United Nations humanitarian organizations regarding improved access and delivery of aid to some affected populations, to urge Governments in the region to further facilitate humanitarian access, including in terms of bureaucratic and administrative procedures, for humanitarian organizations, and to promote collaboration with United Nations partners with the aim of developing and implementing viable and sustainable options for delivering aid, including through more effective civilian-military coordination mechanisms;

(l) To receive updated information and briefings from government and humanitarian actors on the food security situation in the region, with a particular focus on the hardest-hit areas, as well as on suggested targeted measures to improve the situation that Governments, supported by the international community, could take in the short and medium terms;

(m) To meet displaced persons and study areas for targeted international support/mobilization for humanitarian assistance, early recovery and development and human rights protection, and to urge Governments in the region, donors and relevant international non-governmental organizations to urgently further scale up their efforts in the region and ensure close coordination of their efforts, including by

promoting and enabling safe access to populations in need, improving living conditions in host communities, enhancing food security and increasing livelihood opportunities;

(n) To receive briefings from United Nations country teams and representatives of humanitarian organizations on their contribution to a coordinated international response to the emergency and early recovery, such as increasing synergies between humanitarian and development actors to promote sustainable solutions in support of the Governments of the region, and to encourage strong United Nations leadership that involves cross-border coordination, increased capacity and the development of multi-year, prioritized plans based on gender sensitive programming;

(o) To receive briefings on current population movements, including displacement and return linked to the Boko Haram and ISIL conflict, to urge the authorities to uphold the principle of non-refoulement and ensure that any returns, both cross-border and internal, are voluntary, safe and dignified, and to encourage the Governments of Nigeria and Cameroon to finalize, in coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, a tripartite agreement solidifying their commitment to those principles;

Root causes

(p) To underscore the critical importance of a holistic approach to addressing the underlying drivers of the conflict and to preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, which includes enhanced efforts to improve governance, economic growth and education in affected areas, especially among young people, in cooperation with religious and other leaders;

(q) To stress the need for Governments in the region, with the assistance of partners, to consolidate the rule of law and strengthen efforts to tackle corruption, facilitate stabilization efforts, reconstruction and development, ensure a transition to civilian-led delivery of security and justice, prevent the illicit trafficking of weapons to armed groups, as well as any other form of illicit trafficking, protect human rights and promote gender equality and women's empowerment;

(r) To receive briefings from the Governments in the region and United Nations country teams on the impact of climate and ecological changes, including desertification, land degradation and drought, on the humanitarian and security situation and long-term stability and development prospects in the region, and their role in exacerbating the traditional drivers of conflict;

(s) To assess and promote the contribution of civil society in the region, particularly youth and women's organizations, to conflict prevention, conflict resolution and humanitarian efforts, to assess the effectiveness of the partnerships between Governments in the region and civil society in those areas, and to interact with civil society, including women's organizations, in the field;

(t) To encourage relevant Governments in the region to collaborate with the United Nations in the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel in order to address the underlying root causes of instability and conflict in the region;

Women's participation

(u) To affirm the vital role of women, including women in civil society, in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peacebuilding and deradicalization efforts, to request an update on Governments' efforts to ensure the full and equal participation of women at all decision-making levels within national institutions and

mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts, and to encourage Governments in the region and the United Nations to ensure the participation and leadership of women and women's organizations in developing strategies to counter Boko Haram and ISIL, stabilize the region and enable reconstruction and recovery;

Disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and deradicalization

(v) To encourage Governments in the region to develop a common approach to address defections and detentions relating to Boko Haram, including prosecutorial, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies and the transfer of detainees among affected countries, bearing in mind the need for due process, transparency and compliance with international human rights law and international humanitarian law; to underline the need to pay particular attention to the treatment and reintegration of women and children associated with this terrorist group, including the rapid handover of children to the appropriate agencies; and to call upon the Governments of the region to provide protection actors with access to all detention centres holding children in order to address their well-being and protection needs;

(w) To highlight the importance of regional disarmament, demobilization and reintegration for persons associated with Boko Haram, including defectors and detainees, as well as for the Civilian Joint Task Force and other vigilante and community-based security groups, with a component to address the specific protection needs of women and children, as a vital element of the transition from conflict to development, to enable community reconciliation and reintegration and to underpin the success of post-conflict stabilization efforts, and to encourage Governments in the region to invest in mechanisms for screening and processing persons associated with Boko Haram, including former enablers, fighters and commanders, dependants, displaced persons, detainees and other meaningful groups, into relevant categories to facilitate subsequent steps in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and other relevant processes;

(x) To discuss the reintegration programme established by the authorities in the Niger, which includes the setting up of dedicated camps for ex-militants while maintaining a balance to combat impunity and equally prioritizing community sensitization efforts, and to encourage all Governments in the region to begin actively preparing communities for the return of persons associated with Boko Haram as the number of defectors and returnees continues to grow throughout the region.